

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 IO-14 SAJ-01 ACDA-19 OMB-01 NIC-01 DRC-01

SAM-01 /139 W

----- 021533

R 091639Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4328

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION BERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 12631

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, WB, UR

SUBJECT: NPD PARTICIPATION IN BERLIN ELECTION

REF: BERLIN 1241 AND 1304 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. EMBASSY DOES NOT FAVOR ALLOWING THE NPD TO PARTICIPATE IN THE WEST BERLIN ELECTIONS. WE ARE NOT DISPOSED, AS PROPOSED BY USBER, TO HAVE SENAT MONITOR NPD ACTIVITIES. WE RECOMMEND ALLIED MOVE TO KEEP NPD FROM PRESENTING SLATE OF CANDIDATES AND, IF THAT IS NOT ENOUGH TO KEEP IT FROM BECOMING ACTIVE IN THE CAMPAIGN, A BAN ON ITS PUBLIC ACTIVITIES FOR THE DURATION OF THE CAMPAIGN. END SUMMARY.

2. WE DO NOT FAVOR ALLOWING THE NPD TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY FASHION IN THE UPCOMING WEST BERLIN ELECTIONS. WE THEREFORE CONSIDER THE RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION IN PARA 6 OF BERLIN 1241 INADVISABLE. IN OUR VIEW, THE SENAT, ALREADY CLEARLY UNEASY ABOUT TRYING TO CONTROL
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OR HINDER NPD ELECTIONEERING ACTIVITIES, WOULD NOT BE

LIKELY TO CARRY OUT MUCH OF A MONITORING CAMPAIGN. THE PARTY WOULD, IN SUCH A CASE, INEVITABLY BECOME ACTIVE IN THE CAMPAIGN AND, HENCE, ATTRACT PUBLIC ATTENTION.

3. THE FACT IS THAT WE DO HAVE A COMMITMENT OF SORTS TO THE SOVIETS ON THE NPD. THE ALLIED SIDE IN MAY, 1972 AND AGAIN IN AUGUST, 1972 TOOK A FAIRLY FORTHCOMING POSITION TOWARD THE SOVIETS ON THIS ISSUE IN THE QUADRIPARTITE NEGOTIATIONS ON BERLIN. THE SOVIETS HAVE SOME REASON, BASED ON THE NEGOTIATION RECORD, TO EXPECT THE ALLIES TO CONTROL THE PARTY'S PUBLIC ACTIVITIES IN WEST BERLIN. OUR ALLOWING IT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CAMPAIGN WOULD, IN OUR VIEW, BE REGARDED AS A BREACH OF OUR UNDERSTANDING BY THE SOVIETS WHO WOULD VERY LIKELY CONSIDER THAT WE WERE WELCHING ON THAT COMMITMENT. SUCH A CONSIDERATION NEED NOT WEIGH TOO HEAVILY, SINCE THE NATURE OF THE COMMITMENT IS, AS USBER POINTS OUT, VAGUE. BUT WE WOULD NOT EXPECT THE SOVIETS TO ACCEPT NPD PARTICIPATION IN THE CAMPAIGN WITHOUT REACTION. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THEY WOULD PERMIT RESURRECTION OF THE GDR DECREE BANNING NPD MEMBERS FROM USING THE TRANSIT ROUTES BETWEEN THE FRG AND WEST BERLIN. (THIS DECREE, ISSUED IN MARCH, 1968, WAS NEVER RESCINDED TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE ALTHOUGH THE GDR HAS MADE NO USE OF IT SINCE THE SIGNING OF THE QA). WERE THE SOVIETS/EAST GERMANS TO TAKE THIS STEP, WHICH WOULD REPRESENT A CLEAR VIOLATION OF THE QA, WE WOULD FIND OURSELVES IN THE UNENVIABLE POSITION OF HAVING A POTENTIAL CONFRONTATION WITH THE SOVIETS OVER THE TRAVEL TO AND FROM BERLIN OF MEMBERS OF A NEO-NAZI PARTY. THIS POSITION WOULD NOT HAVE MUCH PUBLIC SUPPORT OR UNDERSTANDING, EITHER IN THE ALLIED COUNTRIES OR EVEN IN THE FRG.

4. WE WOULD THEREFORE FAVOR A COURSE OF ACTION SOMEWHAT SIMILAR TO THAT PROPOSED IN PARA 7 OF BERLIN 1241. PRESUMABLY AN ALLIED ORDER, ISSUED IN RESPONSE TO A SENAT LETTER, PRECLUDING THE NPD FROM ENTERING A SLATE OF CANDIDATES IN THE ELECTION WOULD SUFFICE TO KEEP THE PARTY FROM BECOMING ACTIVE IN THE CAMPAIGN. SEEN FROM HERE, THIS WOULD APPEAR THE MOST EFFECTIVE AND LEAST

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PROBLEMATIC COURSE OF ACTION. IF IT IS NOT SUFFICIENT (WE WOULD APPRECIATE USBER'S VIEW ON THIS POINT), WE WOULD THEN FAVOR THE ADDITIONAL STEP OF BANNING ALL NPD PUBLIC ACTIVITIES FOR THE PERIOD SEPTEMBER 1, 1974 THROUGH MARCH 2, 1975 (THE LATTER IS THE DATE OF THE ELECTION).

5. OBVIOUSLY, WERE WE TO CONSIDER TAKING EITHER OR BOTH

OF THE STEPS OUTLINED IN THE ABOVE PARAGRAPH, WE WOULD HAVE TO CONSULT CLOSELY WITH THE FRG. THERE ARE DOMESTIC WEST GERMAN RAMIFICATIONS IN ANY ALLIED ACTION IN WEST BERLIN, NOT LEAST BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE NPD PARTICIPATION IN THE HESSE AND BAVARIAN ELECTIONS THIS FALL (OCTOBER 27). WE HAVE CHECKED BUT THERE IS AS YET NO FIRM INFORMATION AS TO WHETHER THE NPD WILL RUN A SLATE OF CANDIDATES IN THESE ELECTIONS. ANY MOVE BY THE ALLIES

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 12631

IN BERLIN TO BAN THE PARTY'S ACTIVITIES COULD BRING PRESSURE TO DO THE SAME IN THE EARLIER ELECTIONS IN THE FRG. THIS MAY BE A DEVELOPMENT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WILL WISH TO AVOID, FOR DOMESTIC, POLITICAL AND CONSTITUTIONAL/LEGAL REASONS.

6. NOTWITHSTANDING THE DIFFICULTIES WE MAY HAVE WITH THE FRG (AND POSSIBLY ALSO WITH THE UK--THE FRENCH

EMBASSY HERE FAVORS A BAN OF THE NPD IN BERLIN)
IN THIS FIELD, WE SEE NO EASY WAY OF AVOIDING OUR MEETING
THE ISSUE SQUARELY. TO DO OTHERWISE IS APT, IN OUR VIEW,
TO GET US INTO MORE PROBLEMS, NOT LEAST OF WHICH MIGHT
BE A PUBLIC SOVIET CHARGE OF VIOLATING AN "UNDERSTANDING"
REACHED IN THE CONTEXT OF THE QA NEGOTIATIONS. WE DO
NOT FAVOR THE ALLIES' OPENING THEMSELVES TO PUBLIC
CHARGES OF HAVING CONCLUDED SECRET AGREEMENTS WITH THE
SOVIETS IN THE BERLIN CONTEXT.

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7. WE RECOMMEND THAT THE DEPARTMENT APPROVE THE COURSE
OF ACTION OUTLINED IN PARA 4 ABOVE, WITH OUR USING THE
FIRST LINE OF APPROACH IF THAT IS SUFFICIENT, OR BOTH
LINES IF IT IS NOT. WE ALSO FAVOR MOVING QUICKLY,
BEFORE WE RECEIVE ANY SOVIET COMMUNICATION ON THE SUB-
JECT OF THE NPD'S PARTICIPATION IN THE ELECTIONS SO
THAT WE CAN CLAIM PUBLICLY, IF PRESSED, THAT WE ARE
ACTING ON OUR OWN INITIATIVE AND NOT UNDER SOVIET
PRESSURE.

8. ACTION REQUESTED: DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS.
HILLENBRAND

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